

Remarks

Claims 1-26 are pending.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-26 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over published European patent application 320,594 ("EP '594") or published PCT application WO 97-370078 ("WO '078"). The Examiner asserts that EP '594 discloses an aqueous dispersion for sizing paper as claimed with the exception of the particle size element. The Examiner points to WO '078 as evidence that the claimed particle size is typical for emulsion polymers of this nature. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 is drawn to a method for sizing paper or paper board by applying to at least one surface an aqueous dispersion of polymeric particles, wherein the polymeric particles comprise a water insoluble polymer matrix with an oligomer located on the surface of the particles. The oligomer is formed from a monomer blend comprising (meth)acrylamide and an organic mercaptan or organic sulphone.

EP '594 provides a composition suitable for coating substrates. The composition is characterized by having:

Claimed Features	Prior Art Passage
an aqueous dispersion of polymeric particles,	Page 5, lines 1-5
wherein the polymeric particles comprise a water insoluble polymer matrix,	Page 5, lines 35-45
comprised of ethylenically unsaturated monomer or monomer blend	(meth)acrylic acid monomer, page 5
characterized in that an oligomer formed from a monomer blend comprising	
(a) (meth)acrylamide and	
(b) an organic mercaptan or organic sulphone,	Surface addition of alkylmercaptan
is located at the surface of the polymer particles.	

EP '594 does not disclose or suggest the formation of the oligomer as defined in the claims. The Examiner has not found a reference that incorporates an oligomer as defined herein onto the surface of a polymer particle and failed to establish a proper prima-facie showing of obviousness. The alternative reference cited by the Examiner is cited by the Examiner only for the particle size feature of the claims. Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw his obviousness rejection based on the teachings of EP '564 and WO '078.

Applicants submit that the present invention is now in condition for allowance. In the event that minor amendments will further prosecution, Applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAN 24 2003

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